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**PRESERVATION CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES IN CALIFORNIA
THE CRITICAL ISSUES**

The State Plan identifies and discusses the major social, economic, political, educational, and environmental issues that confront California as we approach the millennium and move into the twenty-first century. Historic preservation is by and large a domain of public policy. As such, its direction, goals, challenges, successes and limitations are often linked to the prevailing socio-economic and political concerns that define the public policy agenda of the state and of its geo-political subdivisions. The State Plan explores these links and the manner in which they influence the content and direction of California's historic preservation program.

The Resurgence of Population Growth

California experienced a 25% population increase during the 1980s. The current population is estimated to be about 34 million. This represents a doubling of the state's population since the mid-1960s. It is increasing at a rate faster than anticipated owing to the state's strong recovery from the recession of the early 1990s. Projections indicate that by the year 2020, California will have 50 million residents.

The rate of California's population growth has recently accelerated due to impressive expansion in the service and high tech sectors of the economy. This expansion has spawned a resurgence of immigration and an increase in the birth rate owing in part to confidence that economic growth and "good times" will continue for the foreseeable future. With the exception of the northwest coast and the northeastern inland regions, virtually all areas of California are expected to have a net population increase through the first decade of the new century. The highest increases are anticipated for the Los Angeles area, the Inland Empire, the Mother Lode counties, and the counties that comprise the central Sacramento and the San Joaquin Valleys.

As in the past, California's population will continue to be the most linguistically and culturally diverse in the nation, with the possible exception of Hawaii. The United States population is undergoing a profound demographic shift. The Sacramento Bee of March 14, 1996 cites the U.S. Census Bureau which predicts that by the year 2050 approximately 50 percent of the population will be racially diversified with 25% Latinos, 14% African Americans, and 8% Asian Americans. In California, the 1990 census figures indicated the state had a 43 percent minority population. California is expected to attain a "minority majority" before the start of the new millennium. Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Imperial Counties already have "minority majorities".

In addition, the other fast rising group is the 50-plus-years-old baby boom generation reaching retirement years. By the year 2030, about 20 percent of Americans will be over 65 years old.

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Characteristically, the history of California is a collection of local histories influenced by local events and local issues unfamiliar to recent immigrants from other countries or new arrivals from other states in the Union. California is not a community of shared history or values. A recent emigrant from the steel-manufacturing center of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for example, may lack an interest in or an understanding of the importance of preserving a fruit packing shed in Fresno, California. The challenge of California's diversified and increasing population is not of numbers but of historic preservation education and awareness.

The Resurgent Economy

Having emerged like a phoenix from the ashes of the early 1990s recession, California's economy is now surging forward, outpacing the growth rate of the national recovery as a whole. The state's output of goods and services is at an all time high, unemployment is hovering around a remarkably low 4.5% of the workforce, and peacetime productivity is setting records. The Asian financial crisis that burst upon the world economic scene in 1998 has not yet had the deleterious effect on California's Pacific Rim trade that was expected. Stabilization and recent growth of the Mexican economy has also been salutary for California's trade relationship with its southern neighbor. The lack of any significant inflationary pressures (and the confidence this creates) is largely responsible for creating the capital and investment that is fueling the current economic expansion and sustaining California's economy as the seventh largest in the world.

International trade, the entertainment industry, high technology, biotechnology, communications, banking and finance, and the service sector in general are currently the engines driving the forward momentum of the state's economy. The net result is reflected in California's currently impressive economic statistics and in the record-setting tax revenues responsible for a budget surplus.

MAJOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ISSUES IN CALIFORNIA

The major historic preservation issues that concern Californians emerge and may be usefully understood if we remember that they originate in the context of what has been discussed above: A surge in population growth and a strong, expanding economy.

Integrating Historic Preservation Into Land Use Planning

It is virtually axiomatic that sustained economic expansion and population growth in a free market economy place enormous burdens on existing infrastructure, much of which is under-maintained and crumbling. This creates a demand for expanding basic facilities and installations such as roads, schools, power plants, water plants,

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sewerage treatment facilities, and transportation and communications systems. In addition, the pressure to provide more housing, more parking lots and more local or regional marketplaces such as mega-malls, and strip shopping centers becomes enormous. Hamstrung by the fiscal limitations imposed by Proposition 13, local governments have developed and implemented land use policies that encourage massive growth and thus maximize the revenue stream from new taxes and fees (fiscalization of land use). These conditions existed just before the recession of the early 1990s and they exist today in the current climate of economic recovery and expansion.

Left to their own devices, these pressures have had an unmistakable impact on our older rural and urban environments as well as on the natural environment throughout the state. This impact is manifest as sprawl (more politely known as unmanaged growth). It has both an urban and suburban dimension.

The consequences of sprawl for both the natural and the historic built environment are generally detrimental. This is largely because sprawl exhibits a pattern of consumptive behavior generally at odds with conservation and the wise use of cultural and natural resources.

Governments and developers may cooperate to expand urban and suburban boundaries using powers of annexation or by making irresistible offers to members of the farming community. In the process, open space, whether farmland or natural environments, is transformed into bedroom communities consisting of subdivisions and related service facilities that do not have an identifiable neighborhood core or character. Older commercial areas and established neighborhoods of the original community often suffer economic decline, blight and abandonment. They may become pockets of decay and crime that can languish for years or be replaced by an “urban renewal” program. Often, these areas are historic, representing the original character and identity of a community.

As open space, such as farmland and natural environments, are consumed by sprawl, rural lifeways, historic landscapes, and archeological properties are also consumed and lost to posterity.

Sprawl feeds on its own success and in the process, fuels a self-sustaining cycle of consumption and environmental degradation that is evident in the loss of species, habitat, and scenic areas. New road and highways are built or existing corridors are expanded. Air quality deteriorates as a result of extended commuting by more single occupancy vehicles. The consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels is accelerated. Gridlock emerges and undermines the most productive use of workers’ time. Time spent with family and friends and time devoted to community may be diminished. In California, uncontrolled growth surely exacerbates the already sensitive and divisive subject of water development and distribution.

Historically, sprawl typically reaches a point where it becomes a political, social, and

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economic liability. That point is reached when, in the minds of affected communities and stakeholders, sprawl degrades the community's "quality of life". Political action calling for managed, controlled, slow, smart, or no growth emerges when concerned stakeholders realize that the community is only marginally or no longer "livable".

Restoring the community to a livable condition typically involves certain land use planning and decision-making tools that can counteract sprawl. Among these are:

(1) Urban/suburban boundaries created by open space, farming or green belts that restrict an area's outward expansion. Lands for these purposes may be purchased outright or the development rights to such lands may be acquired. In addition to controlling sprawl, this tool, coupled with use of the Williamson Act, may be used to conserve agricultural land. It is a tool also useful in creating habitat, scenic corridors and recreational amenities. It may also benefit the preservation of historic rural landscapes, archeological resources and some traditional cultural properties.

(2) Developing high-density, mixed-use projects located close to transportation facilities or within reasonable walking or cycling distance of workplaces. Such projects may form the nucleus of a "neighborhood" that achieves or restores a distinct identity and cohesiveness to an area. The core of projects such as this may be an existing historic residential or commercial area. Rehabilitation of decaying, misused, or underused historic homes and apartment buildings and adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized commercial structures may stimulate a neighborhood renaissance that enhances the quality of life of the area and may inspire adjacent areas to follow suit. Finally, use of this tool minimizes the need for construction of new and expensive infrastructure.

The increasing need to address declining resources and increasing environmental threats has led to the developmental concept of "sustainability". The United Nations defines sustainable development as meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Understanding that sustainability encompasses societal, economical, and environmental aspects develops a basis for a sustainable community. Local, regional, and state programs should include historic preservation, as well as recycling, energy conservation, waste reduction, and use of renewable materials. The preservation, adaptive re-use, and rehabilitation of historic and cultural resources, including buildings, parks, structures, farms and ranches, and archeological sites, are important components of efforts to ensure sustainable communities.

Historic preservation is not a standard or routine component of land use planning in California. Very few communities have an historic preservation element in their general plans. State law does not require them to have one. Even communities with historic preservation ordinances may not have an historic preservation element in

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their general plans. Clearly, there has been an inability or unwillingness to integrate historic preservation into the broader public policy arena of land use planning and decision-making. Advocates have not convinced elected officials or the planning and environmental communities at large that historic preservation can constructively contribute to the resolution of land use planning and related socio-economic issues in California. Historic preservation is frequently viewed as a very narrow and even “elitist” sector of public policy that may be in conflict with the objectives of natural resources conservation. Historic preservation is still viewed by some as a vehicle for “gentrification” of less affluent neighborhoods and communities.

We have suggested that the resource conservation and “livable communities” objectives advocated by proponents of managed growth have an affinity with the goals of the historic preservation community. The philosophical foundations of both movements have much in common in their emphasis on conservation and preservation. The tools each can use to achieve its objectives are complementary. It therefore seems appropriate and useful for these communities to jointly explore the opportunities for cooperation in the pursuit of sensible growth policies.

However, there is one consequence of anti-sprawl/sensible growth policies that should be of great concern to the historic preservation community because it raises an issue of environmental justice. Effective growth limitation policies can cause property values to skyrocket and as a result, create “livable” communities accessible only to the more affluent classes of our society. The “livable” community and the historic resources within it may therefore become exclusionary. Should historic preservationists advocating growth management as a preservation policy ensure that “gentrification” and its variants are controlled and that the “livable” community reflects the population of California in all of its cultural and socio-economic diversity?

Cultural Landscapes and Traditional Cultural Properties

Cultural landscapes and traditional cultural properties are means of viewing historical resources from how a community has interacted with its environment over time. Recognition of each of these resource types is based on the ever changing and evolving cultures that they reflect and is also based upon the role such properties play in a community’s historically-rooted beliefs, customs, and practices. As a result of being culturally based, it is sometimes difficult to know at which point in time they should be evaluated and if changes are positive or negative or merely the natural process of cultural maintenance.

For the purpose of historic preservation, each of these resource types must have historic roots in the community. Enough time must have passed to understand how each has affected and are likely to affect the community in which they exist. Each resource type may encompass a large area and designation may be confusing to planners and even community members. But each type provides a context as to what

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has and continues to be important to a community for the purpose of evaluating individual and groups of historical resources.

Because these resource types are so rooted in the community, it is sometimes difficult to draw boundaries to designate the “property.” In some instances, they are more easily managed than designated. For the purpose of the state plan, these resources present issues regarding the establishment of boundaries for the historical property and determining the period of significance for resources which reflect a living and ever changing human experience.

Post World War II and Cold War–era Structures (Suburban Residential and Commercial)

As California approaches the close of the 20th Century, it is becoming apparent to the historic preservation community that newer and more diverse types of historic resources will soon demand its attention. These resources will include the many thousands of homes, commercial structures, educational institutions, churches, transportation structures, and sports facilities built in the years spanning 1950 –1960. This immense body of potential historic resources will find at its core the suburban subdivision, the basic unit that exemplifies the development pattern underlying the greatest building boom in American history. California, with its plentiful land, water, and material wealth was well suited to be the leader of suburban growth in the nation during the post-war period.

Beginning from the urban cores of Los Angeles, San Francisco/Oakland, San Diego, and Sacramento, post-war suburban growth centers began as nothing more than bedroom communities with little commercial development. Within ten years, however, commercial growth was to keep pace with expanding suburban populations, bringing with it jobs and entrepreneurial expertise. This growth often came at the expense of the core cities and their increasingly poor populations. Within twenty years, the expanding suburban cores would take on more of the trappings of thriving urban areas than the idyllic rural enclaves they were once envisioned to be. They would contain residential, commercial, governmental, and transportation structures representing a wide range of architectural and engineering styles and functions. In many instances, however, the sameness of design for many suburban subdivisions were viewed by many as an example trend toward the creation of a sterile, unimaginative society.

Despite these and other criticisms, the necessity of evaluating suburban resources under National Register eligibility criteria will present a formidable challenge for historic preservation professionals. Preservation professionals at many levels are already studying application of the eligibility criteria to this body of resources. Of particular interest are approaches being developed by professionals such as David L. Ames in his draft work entitled “*Context and Guidelines for Evaluating America’s Historic Suburbs for the National Register of Historic Places*” (University of

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Delaware, September 1998). Despite this and other efforts, very little has been developed in the way of definitive policy for applying the criteria to these resources. Much work remains in attempting to identify, evaluate, and record these resources as individual properties, historic districts, and suburban, rural, and/or cultural landscapes. The information gained from these studies will only expand our knowledge of the development, settlement, and growth of California in the latter half of the 20th century. The recent formation of the Certified Local Government (CLG) program in California towns and cities is an essential tool in involving local municipalities, preservation organizations, and the general public in this undertaking.

World War II and Cold War Era Military Properties

The Congressional implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) has hit California especially hard over the past ten years. California's massive military infrastructure was a prominent target for military downsizing and realignments reflecting the changing mission of the U.S. armed forces away from nuclear deterrence and retaliation to mobile conventional strike forces able to wage wars on two to three fronts. As a result, California has suffered the economic and social impact of over a dozen base closures and realignments throughout the state. This has resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs and the restructuring of the economies of the towns, cities, and counties that relied on defense spending as a crucial component of their economic well being.

The implementation of BRAC has also had a profound effect on the ability of the Department of Defense (DOD), its various military branches, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Office of Historic Preservation to identify, evaluate, preserve, maintain, and, if necessary, reuse historic properties located on military bases and research facilities. Base closure and realignment has focused the attention of the DOD and NASA on potential historic resources and their possible role in the closure and realignment process. Of particular interest to the DOD, NASA, and the DOE are those historic properties that date from the World War II era (1939-1946) and the Cold War era (1946-1989).

While a large number of World War II-era temporary wooden structures have been demolished in accordance with the stipulations of the 1991 Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the DOD and the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO), many other World War II-era properties have been determined eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These properties are now being incorporated into the preservation and maintenance plans of those military bases still in operation as well as the plans of public and private entities taking control of closed bases. The preservation and maintenance of Cold War-era properties has been more problematic due to their locations on ongoing military bases and research facilities and their roles in the changing missions of the military and space exploration programs they serve. In some cases, access to

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information on these structures is limited due to national security considerations and concerns. It will be a number of years before a complete inventory of Cold War-era resources throughout California is available for review by SHPO and the public.

One consequence of BRAC activity in California has been a heightened awareness of the general public of the kinds of historic properties located on closing military bases and research facilities. Public awareness of historic properties on bases such as Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Long Beach Naval Station, March Air Force Base, McClellan Air Force Base, and Treasure Island was expanded once access to these previously restricted facilities was allowed. Public interest in the disposition of historic properties on these and other facilities increased as well, prompting local governments to incorporate public forums and dialogue into the master planning process for base reuse. The results of this activity have been mixed. Historic properties have been preserved in the majority of instances where heightened public awareness played a key role in the BRAC process. However, the Long Beach Naval Station closure clearly illustrates that the wishes of the public to preserve historic properties will not always prevail in certain political or economic climates. Such cases clearly show that the public must be made aware of the nature and quality of the historic resources located on existing military and research facilities in California. Only then can the public, the military, and other interested Federal agencies work together to preserve and protect historic properties in their care.

Information Technology and Historic Preservation

The expansion of computer-based telecommunications holds the potential to dramatically affect historic preservation programs. The information superhighway will help meet the increasing demand for cultural resources information by allowing professionals and the general public to access up-to-date on-line databases containing resource listings, technical publications, funding sources, educational references, resource interpretation, and preservation project case studies. Increased options for telecommunications will facilitate preservation networking, lobbying, and public education. Geographic Information Systems technology will also improve planning by demonstrating relationships between historical resources and other variables.

However, while increased access to information is a positive step in many respects, it also brings with it challenges. These include the tremendous growth in the size and nature of California's cultural resource record, increasing costs of information management, changes in professional standards, strategies, and techniques, and new, rapidly changing, and swiftly vanishing formats of information. Concern about the security of confidential information is another issue that is especially true in regard to archeological sites. Members of the Native American community as well as others have serious worries that looters may find a way to access supposedly secure on-line information reserved for authorized agencies and individuals only.

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Although the information superhighway increases access to information in many ways, the rapid proliferation of information available on-line can be difficult for public and private agencies and organizations to keep up with. Additionally, as government and private industry seeks to move toward ideally “paperless” communications, it is imperative that we keep in mind that the latest technology is not available to all citizens or for all locations in California and this must be taken into account as services are planned and implemented.

Historic Preservation Incentives

Constant development pressures place historic properties and open space lands at risk. In addition, the cost of preservation, including seismic disaster mitigation, is perceived as a serious threat to historic resources. Although historic preservation has been shown to promote community revitalization and economic development, the cost, both real and perceived, of preservation projects often becomes an obstacle.

Federal, state, and local laws lack sufficient economic incentive provisions to encourage private property owners to preserve open space lands with archaeological sites or to rehabilitate older historic building stock. Additionally, the common practice of assessing and taxing land on the basis of development potential (its “highest and best” use) creates conflicts with private and public conservation and preservation goals. Unwittingly, compliance with historic preservation ordinances or meeting specific design standards may, in some cases, impose additional economic costs.

California’s four specific preservation incentive programs are state property tax relief, State Historic Building Code, tax-exempt bond financing, and Heritage Preservation Fund. However, the historic preservation community in California should pursue further incentives such as a state rehabilitation tax credit program, mortgage guarantees, a property tax exemption for income-producing historic properties, and state revenues dedicated to historic preservation projects. Additionally, future “smart growth” incentives intended to promote reinvestment in downtowns and other urban areas should include inducements to re-use older building stock and assessment of open space or farmland based on its present use rather than on full market value according to its development potential. Local governments in California can do much to create a preservation-friendly development environment through such local measures as transfers of development rights, permit fee waivers, parking requirement exemptions, and disincentives for surface parking lots and for demolition of historic structures.

Cultural Diversity and Historic Preservation

California has witnessed within the last twenty years the growth and development of the most diverse collection of peoples and cultures found anywhere in the world.

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This phenomenon has produced a multicultural society that is representative of nearly every ethnic, racial, cultural, social, and religious group on earth. California's Native American population represents the group with the longest linkages to the state's historical past. California has a significant number of archeological sites, objects, and places with special meaning for Native Americans. Existing statutes and regulations, though improved in recent years, continue to provide little or no guidance as to how to incorporate the interests of Native American groups into environmental law. This has resulted in the general public's failure to fully understand the connection between prehistoric and present day Native Americans.

Similar kinds of resources also have meaning for other ethnic and cultural groups with ties to California's historic past. Like Native Americans, however, few of these groups have been adequately consulted or involved in the preservation of the resources associated with their historic pasts. California, as the premier example of a multicultural society on the U.S. mainland, must encourage greater involvement of the state's diverse ethnic and other marginalized groups in historic preservation activities. Outreach programs and activities such as special surveys identifying ethnic minority properties, and publications making such information available to the general public should serve to highlight and promote the rich social and cultural diversity of the state's historical resources. In this way the cultural and educational benefits that are derived from historic preservation activities can be made available to all Californians. This especially includes focusing on increasing the involvement of ethnic minorities and the economically disadvantaged in programs that create cultural resource management career opportunities and historic preservation activity.

Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Comprehensive planning for the conservation/preservation of archaeological resources involves the four-step process of identification, evaluation, registration and treatment. The relationship among these activities is considered in this section.

Critical issues in the preservation of California's archaeological resources include archaeological resource protection, education, public outreach, and public involvement in archaeology, and the curation of archaeological collections.

Archaeological Resource Protection

Archaeological sites are fragile, finite, and irreplaceable. Of the four general types of forces that can damage or destroy archaeological sites and their values (i.e., natural forces, human action, institutional action, and legal/regulatory procedures), by far the most varied and damaging forces on archaeological resources are caused by human actions and by associated institutional actions and legal or regulatory procedures.

Human Action. Looting and vandalism are major sources of site damage and destruction. The motivation for these actions varies. Although damage and destruction of archaeological sites from looting is deliberate and intentional, other

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damage from human and institutional actions occurs largely due to ignorance of a site's existence or importance. Despite the general and widespread public fascination with archaeology and learning about the past, consideration of archaeological resources is not usually a factor in the daily conduct of government and business.

Institutional Action. Land development and resource exploitation activities continue to increase as the State's growing population demands ever more food, housing, and manufactured goods. Activities such as agriculture (e.g., plowing), mining/quarrying, logging, oil and gas exploration/extraction, land modifications (e.g., reclamation, flood control and grading/filling/earthmoving), land development (including transportation facilities such as streets, highways, airports, residential, commercial, industrial/manufacturing, and public utilities) each involve land modifications that can damage or destroy archaeological sites. Land leveling and plowing may move archaeological materials around and mix materials from separate and distinct soil layers, or even totally destroy the site (depending upon the shallowness or depth of the archaeological remains). Massive land modifications such as flood control projects, large-scale residential developments and interstate highway construction, for example, have resulted in the loss of hundreds of archaeological sites that represent entire communities that existed and thrived in the past.

Legal and Regulatory Procedures. Laws and regulations may require or prohibit individual or institutional actions that unintentionally cause archaeological damage or loss. An example of such unintentional loss is the historic district ordinance. A number of California local governments have enacted this legal mechanism for protecting historic properties. Unfortunately, only a handful of these ordinances are comprehensive enough to include archaeological sites for full consideration along with built environment resources. In those communities with historic district ordinances that lack an archeological element, archaeological sites can inadvertently overlooked as actions approved under the ordinance are implemented. As well, many local governments attempt to manage the future growth through preparation and implementation of a comprehensive or master plan. When archaeological resources are not included for consideration in such planning documents, decisions by the local government about development and land use inevitably result in the loss of archaeological sites. Similarly, regulatory procedures-such as those for approving construction or grading permits-may also have the same effect if the presence of archaeological resources is not considered.

There are laws protecting archaeological resources on state and federal lands in California. These include, but are not limited to 1) the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA); 2) Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.5; and, 3) California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 1427, (4) Penal Code (PC) Section 622.5.

While ARPA is an excellent piece of legislation and a number of successful prosecutions in northern California and elsewhere have demonstrated that it can be enforced effectively and yield good results, it only protects sites on federal property.

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PRC Section 5097.5, also well written, is designed to protect sites on state owned lands. CCR 1427 is an excellent regulation, but only protects sites in state forests. The only law that protects sites on private property, which constitutes over 60 percent of the State, is PC 622.5.

PC 622.5, written in 1939, is out of date. It prohibits archaeological sites from being “disfigured, injured, defaced, or objects destroyed,” but does not specifically prohibit unauthorized site excavations. (i.e., pothunting, relic hunting. Digging sites, even without the landowner’s permission, is not specifically prohibited under this law and no prosecution attempt would ever be successful. Since most archaeological sites in California are on private land, the majority of the state’s archaeological resources are not protected in law.

The laws protecting archaeological sites recognize the need to protect significant archaeological resources but often fail to provide an effective mechanism for protection. In addition to looting and vandalism, much destruction of California’s archaeological heritage is occurring because developers violate their permits, there is little or no follow-up by the permitting agency, and penalties are not severe enough to deter permit violations.

In-Place Conservation and Long-Term Management of Archaeological Sites.

Damage to and destruction of archaeological sites may result from situations where developers violate their permits, and little or no follow-up by the permitting agency is provided and/or the existing penalties are not severe enough to deter permit violations. As well, the scientific, cultural and interpretive values that could result from conserving archaeological sites in place are, all too often, not given full consideration in land planning and decision-making by agencies and local governments. In too many projects data recovery (archaeological excavation of a sample of the site) is overwhelmingly selected as the preferred form of mitigation treatment at the expense of other forms of treatment.

Among institutional actions that result in damage and destruction to archaeological sites is data recovery (i.e., archaeological excavation) itself. Although performed systematically and resulting in the recovering of archaeological information, the act of removing soil layers and artifacts disrupts the relationships of information within the site, impairs its traditional cultural values, and can result in the loss of some information. Also, the end result of data recovery/archaeological excavation is the same as if a bulldozer had leveled the site: serious damage or destruction of the site. This is why archaeologists insist on high levels of professional competence, the use of precise excavation techniques, and the maintenance of detailed written and photographic records of the process. Valuable archaeological information can be lost through inadequate record keeping, lack of analysis and reporting, ineffective land management, and inadequate or incomplete assessment of impacts on sites. In the highly technological world of the last decade of the twentieth-century, archaeologists decry the losses of information on archaeological sites excavated decades ago using the professionally accepted methods of the day. Will archaeological methods in use

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today elicit similar criticisms by the archaeologists of the future?

There are a number of factors contributing to the final selection of a mitigation option when an archaeological site is threatened by a planned project or undertaking. Two of the factors that contribute to poorly-conceived or inappropriate data recovery are (1) a lack of creativity about ways to mitigate the effects of projects on archaeological sites, and (2) an archaeological conservation ethic that emphasizes preservation of the information from each individual archaeological site rather than dovetailing it into a broader context.

A number of treatment alternatives are available for archaeological resources that include avoidance, long-term management, and data recovery. Although site preservation and long-term management in place have, in theory, been preferred options, data recovery is generally the mitigation treatment of choice. The reasons for this are varied but include situations where late consideration has left planners with no other alternatives, as well as those cases where avoidance options are just not feasible.

A creativity gap in determining appropriate treatment for the protection and enhancement of the State's archaeological resources exists for a number of reasons. A chronic lack of communication and effective partnerships among Federal agencies, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), State agencies, local governments and the private sector has resulted all too often in preservation efforts that are reactive rather than proactive and thus fall short of achieving historic preservation goals. Another factor is reliance on "tried and true" treatment options. In the face of general professional agreement about the irreplaceable, nonrenewable nature of archaeological resources and the information they contain, it is hard to go wrong in recommending the excavation of a threatened archaeological site.

Regarding the archaeological conservation ethic, while the conservation and long-term management of archaeological resources has often been given lip service as the preferred alternative, the archaeological profession, as a whole, has actually done little to encourage creative approaches to archaeological site preservation/conservation and management. In part this is due to a traditional bias toward archaeological excavation over in-place conservation (often under the assumption that the latter was too complicated and expensive) but is due as well to an inability on the part of most members of the profession to accept the notion that the long-term conservation of archaeological sites is the *preferred* treatment alternative. Archaeologists are trained to excavate sites, not preserve them in-place. The ugly fact is that archaeological excavation is easier, it seems to advance research goals, and that's what most archaeologists know how to do best. As a direct result, excavation is promoted as the only way to *ensure* preservation of an archaeological site and the important information it may contain.

Among the host of other factors contributing to the selection of a particular treatment of an archaeological property, redirection of already limited government agency

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funding will continue to force planners and archaeologists to either develop more creative mitigation options or cut back on the quality of their work. Agencies are realizing that they can no longer afford the funding to support wholesale data recovery of archaeological properties. Due to reduced funding, agencies are looking to reduce such expenditures and focus on the “real” project costs that result in a product: a building, a flood control system, a timber harvest.

As well, most projects have lost sight of the bigger picture since most data recovery plans subject to either Section 106 review or CEQA review are focused on site specific or very localized mitigation. The *Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan for California* (1997) is seldom consulted or, at best, only lip service is paid to the priorities it set. As a result, many archaeologists seem to operate under the assumption that every archaeological site that is determined eligible for the National Register or the California Register is either worth saving or excavating simply because it is eligible for one or both of those registers. Questions about what is saved and how it is saved (e.g., whether through conservation in-place or through excavation) and issues such as the reality that not all archaeological sites need to be preserved and not all sites need to be excavated should be addressed consistently and well. Information regarding the costs and benefits of various mitigation alternatives should be developed and included in the guidelines and regulatory framework for the consideration of archaeological resources. Funding sources and incentives for conservation and long-term management of archaeological sites in-place should be identified.

Education, Public Outreach, and Public Involvement in Archaeology

Educating the public about heritage values and involving the public in archaeology are ongoing processes that can provide benefits for everyone. Long-term planning is necessary to establish priorities and also to balance competing interests. An administrative structure is needed to facilitate communication between those groups and agencies already involved in archaeology, and to encourage systematic public outreach programs to increase public involvement and provide educational programs and materials at all levels. A vital component in this process is information that is systematically organized, centrally located, and readily accessible. Modern technology and traditional methods must be utilized to communicate with various segments of the public and must be directed towards these groups in ways that are meaningful to them.

At the present time there are no provisions in the state regulatory framework for the public to receive educational or interpretive benefits from archaeological resource mitigation programs. As well, public access to archaeological information is often restricted and access to archaeological collections may be similarly limited. While this policy is designed to protect sites against vandalism, it may also serve to isolate the public from sites and prevent the development of public stewardship. While some efforts are now being made to provide opportunities for the public to learn about the rich archaeological record of the state, the educational structure already in place in California (i.e., public schools, libraries, institutions, agencies, and organizations) is

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not being used effectively.

California does not adequately feature its archaeological resources to promote tourism. There is a need to develop, coordinate, and publicize opportunities for public participation in archaeology, including site management, site interpretation, and hands-on excavation.

Curation of Archaeological Collections

Curation involves the management of specimens recovered in the course of scientific archaeological investigations and related records produced during the excavation and analysis of these items and their archaeological context. Curation of such collections and storage of associated records is accomplished in archaeological repositories. Every data recovery program conducted in compliance with state law should include provisions for curation of archaeological collections. The “State of California Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections,” issued by the State Historical Resources Commission, provides direction for anyone with archaeological collections in need of curation. The purpose of the Curation Guidelines “is to ensure that archaeological collections and their associated records are preserved and managed adequately so that future generations might use them.” In addition, the Guidelines provide information to firms and agencies to assist them in the curation process. While the status of archaeological collections is being addressed at both the state and local level, many archaeological collections were inadequately prepared, remain inaccessible and are poorly managed, being stored under circumstances that result in their deterioration, damage and/or loss. Existing storage and curatorial facilities frequently have no provisions for access by researchers, members of the Native American community, and the general public. At least partly responsible for this situation is the fact that provisions and funding for curation were not included in the state guidelines and regulatory framework for the consideration of historical resources.

Professional Standards and Guidelines for the Conduct of Archaeological Studies in California

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that cultural resources be given appropriate consideration during the project planning process. For archaeological properties, this may require archaeological investigations such as records and literature searches, pedestrian surveys, excavations, and preservation measures.

There is no consistency regarding what constitutes an adequate study, or the appropriate level of effort for archaeological investigations. Although guidance regarding the preparation of reports, the preparation of research designs and curation have been provided by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), at the present time there are no minimum professional standards and guidelines for the practice of non-federal archaeology and the conduct of archaeological investigations within the

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State. The development and implementation of such standards and guidelines would help to promote consistency among federal, state, and local statutes, ordinances, and regulations.

These minimum standards should include staff qualifications, sampling procedures, level of effort/phasing, technical analyses, record keeping, and documentation. As well, the CEQA Guidelines should require that archaeological investigations be conducted in accordance with those minimum standards. The development and implementation of such standards and guidelines would help to promote consistency among federal, state, and local statutes, ordinances, and regulations.

In 1989 the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), under its state and federal mandates, developed *Archaeological Resource Management Reports: Contents and Format* (ARMR). The purpose of the ARMR Guidelines was to improve the quality of public archaeology in California. Although those guidelines do not represent a state-mandated program, the SHPO strongly urged all those involved with public archaeology to read and use them. In an effort to ensure that an investment in archaeology serves the public interest, the ARMR Guidelines included the following recommendation: “Local governments in particular should adopt the guidelines as the standard according to which archaeological studies will be carried out, reported, and judged.”

The development of standards and guidelines can be facilitated by agency guidance that has been developed over the past decade and many of these documents could be incorporated/adopted with some revision and modification. The *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format* (ARMR Guidelines) for the preparation and review of archaeological reports and *Guidelines for Archaeological Research Designs* are two examples. In addition, several state and federal agencies have developed internal guidance that could be modified where appropriate and used for statewide standards and guidelines. The Caltrans Environmental Handbook is an excellent example of uniform standards and procedures that meet both federal and state historic preservation mandates.

A manual should be developed under the auspices of the OHP and/or the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) that would include portions of the documents cited above. This manual would set out professional standards for those conducting archaeological and other cultural resource investigations, and would provide guidance for determining levels of effort. This would result in more consistent work efforts by different researchers and would also provide guidance to local governments and other agencies regarding the timing and requirements to meet local, state, and federal mandates. *Caltrans’ Guidance to Consultants*, U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s *Wetlands Manual*, and the California Department of Fish and Game’s special status species survey guidelines perform somewhat similar tasks for biological studies. This manual would be made available for use by cultural resource professionals (e.g., archaeologists, historians, architectural historians, ethnographers, and others) as well as local governments for carrying out studies required for CEQA,

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National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental review requirements.

At a minimum, topics that should be considered or addressed in S&Gs are:

- Requirements for professional oversight and involvement in archaeological studies;
- Minimum education and training levels for various tasks and sub-disciplines;
- Review of archaeological reports by qualified professionals;
- Consultation with and participation by the Native American Heritage Commission;
- Standards for consultation with Native American and other descendant groups;
- Oversight mechanisms such as a grievance and review committee;
- Procedures for violators of standards;
- Cultural resource permits for project or agency work;
- Criteria for dissemination of information to the public and other professionals;
- Standards and guidelines that ensure that Native Americans, historical and archaeological societies, and other informants who contribute to reports are provided a copy or provided with information regarding where the report can be obtained;
- Procedures and timing for the identification, evaluation and treatment of archaeological and other cultural resources;
- Guidelines for the development and structuring of technical approaches;
- Guidelines for participation by avocational, student, and paraprofessional archaeologists as well as the interested public.

Disaster Preparedness

During the last decade, the destructive impact of numerous natural disasters has underscored the critical need to implement disaster preparedness strategies to preserve vulnerable historic buildings and archeological sites. Without established plans for disaster preparedness, emergency response, and recovery, all historic resources are at risk. Historic structures are often crucial to the life and economic well being of our communities. The direct correlation between preserving existing buildings after a disaster and the speed of economic recovery cannot be overlooked. Unfortunately, very little has been done to prepare for coming disasters.

The 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake in the San Francisco Bay region resulted in substantial loss of historic buildings. Many buildings were unnecessarily demolished. This was due not so much to the strength of the earthquake as it was to the disaster response by government agencies. The proactive role of established preservation organizations in the Los Angeles region improved the disaster response to the more recent Northridge Earthquake.

Hazard mitigation programs, an integral aspect of disaster preparedness, are needed to reduce the disaster risk to lives and properties during future natural disasters.

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Federal Emergency Management Agency and the State of California have provided mitigation funding for a limited number of projects. These funds are nearly depleted. State laws, such as SB 547, necessitate local governments to inventory and to mitigate or demolish certain categories of hazardous buildings. Unfortunately, retrofit expense is not compensated by the state; costs are the responsibility of local governments and property owners.

The time has come for the State Historical Resources Commission and the Office of Historic Preservation, in consultation with the people of California, to revise and update the Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan for California (State Plan). Although most portions of the revised State Plan will remain consistent with the current plan, *Forging a Future with a Past*, the chapters on major issues in preservation and goals and objectives for the next five years will be updated.

In order to make this State Plan responsive to the broad spectrum of interests and concerns in California, we are inviting comments and suggestions regarding the draft of the revised *Major Preservation Issues in California* chapter.

Because the State Plan is the Office of Historic Preservation's working plan for the next five years, it is of the utmost importance that it be as responsive as possible to the concerns of historic preservation in California. Your thoughts and comments regarding the State Plan are important and are necessary to ensure that this State Plan serves the best interests of historic preservation in our state. We are particularly interested in knowing your thoughts concerning the specific issues we've outlined and if you think there are other major issues that should be addressed in the State Plan.

Please send your comments and suggestions by mail, fax, or email to the OHP by June 30, 1999.

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